



2 Corinthians 7-11

B R C
*Study the Bible
and follow Jesus*

NT #35 Bible Reading Class
Pastor: Wentang Wang

A Bible Reader's Conviction

- *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16-17, NIV)*

A Blessed Journey

1. May you study God's Word with a reverent heart and walk in His will.
2. May the Lord's Word flourish, and may He add to the church those who are being saved.
3. May the Lord bless your days of reading the Scriptures.

Study the Bible, follow Jesus

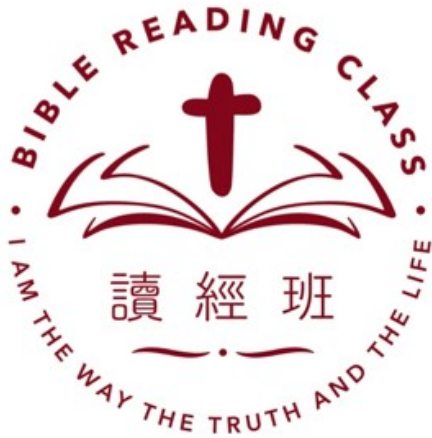


The Guiding Principles of BRC



- Christ-Centered
- Bible-Based
- Mission-Minded

BRC: A Gentleman's Agreement



I'll complete weekly reading assignment

I'll watch weekly teaching video in its entirety

I'll complete weekly quiz (closed book)

The Structure of the 27 Books of the New Testament

- The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) John
- The Fourfold Gospel, Acts, The Thirteen Pauline Epistles, The Other Nine Epistles (General Epistles and Others)
- Five Books of Historical Narrative, Twenty Two Books of Doctrinal Teaching

Outline of 2 Corinthians

- I. Paul's Defense of His Ministry — Chapters 1–7
 - II. Encouragement to Give for Relief — Chapters 8–9
 - III. Warnings to the Disobedient — Chapters 10–13
-

Paul: “Regret, Yet Not Regret”

• *“For even if I made you sorrowful by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while—yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended...” (2 Corinthians 7:8–9)*

• Was Paul fickle? He wrote a letter rebuking the Corinthians. When he heard they were sorrowful (in pain), he regretted it. Did I speak too harshly? Was I too severe?

But many people improve after being rebuked. When Paul saw this, he said, Good thing I rebuked you—look, you’ve changed!

• This emotional back-and-forth is simply the psychology of a parent. When a child does wrong, the parent scolds; when the child cries, the parent feels heartache. Did I speak too harshly? I shouldn’t have said that!

But when the child later improves, the parent thinks, Good thing I disciplined him, or he wouldn’t have changed.

• Between parents and children there is a deep emotional foundation—strong enough to endure rebuke, emotional fluctuation, and struggle. If pastors and congregations share such a foundation, everything becomes easier.

Godly Sorrow

- *For “godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death” See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. (2 Corinthians 7:10–11).*

- Paul says that believers experience two kinds of sorrow: one is godly sorrow, and the other is worldly sorrow. Godly sorrow leads to life; worldly sorrow leads to death. The words spoken by God’s servants do not always make people “feel good”: You are honorable, you are favored by God, you are God’s mighty people, and you can do all things if you rely on the Lord!

Sometimes God’s servants rebuke, causing godly sorrow. And what happens? Some people reflect on themselves, confess, feel remorse, and develop a desire to “cleanse themselves,” drawing closer to God. Paul says this kind of sorrow is good.

Godly Sorrow

- **Worldly sorrow** arises when you listen to what the world says about you and become troubled:

You're not attractive enough.

You're not talented enough.

You're not wealthy enough.

That comment you made might have offended your boss.

Your investment might suffer a huge loss.

You might have cancer.

Someone might be speaking badly about you...

People worry endlessly about such things.

- On top of that, with the rise of modern social media, everyone posts the best version of themselves. Everyone looks beautiful, smiling, eating gourmet food, wearing fashionable clothes, traveling to beautiful places. In comparison, your real life seems inferior in every way, leading to discouragement and deeper sorrow. The wealthier society becomes and the more advanced technology grows, the more cases of mental illness and suicide we see. Truly, *worldly sorrow brings death*.

- What should we do? It's actually simple: Do not listen to the world—listen to God!

If you must feel sorrow, let it be godly sorrow, not worldly sorrow.

Once you see this clearly and make such a decision, you will become much happier.

Four Laws of Spiritual Economics

Chapters 8–9 of 2 Corinthians discuss a relief offering. Jerusalem suffered famine, and believers were in hardship. The Corinthian church intended to prepare an offering to send to Jerusalem. Paul encouraged them to complete this task and taught spiritual financial principles. These can be summarized as the Four Laws of Spiritual Economics:

1. Law of Rich and Poor
2. Law of Harvest
3. Law of Sharing
4. Law of Generosity

I. Law of Rich and Poor

1. **Law of Rich and Poor:** *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.” (2 Corinthians 8:9)*

- **The Rich Household:**

God is the Lord of all things. He is rich and desires His children to be rich. First, He makes those who are not His children become His children. To accomplish this, Christ came into the world.

- **Christ became poor:**

Jesus took on flesh, was born in a manger, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, emptied Himself, took the form of a servant, had no place to lay His head, and finally died on the cross.

The Most High God became human and died for humanity—this is the richest becoming the poorest.

I. Law of Rich and Poor

• From Poverty to Riches:

Those who believe in Jesus are given the right to become children of God, and the Father's abundance becomes the abundance of His children. The richness of God's children is not only spiritual but also material; not only for this present life but also for the life to come.

•The Blessings of God's Children:

God's children receive spiritual blessings that make their lives abundant—filled with love, wisdom, courage, and vitality. In addition, they also receive material blessings, so that their needs are supplied. God's children are not only abundant in this life but even more abundant in the future. What God has prepared for those who love Him is beyond what eyes have seen, ears have heard, or hearts have imagined.

Four Laws of Spiritual Economics

II. The Law of Harvest

2. The Law of Harvest:

*“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.”
(Galatians 6:7)*

*“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows
generously will also reap generously.” (2 Corinthians 9:6)*

A. Law of Same Kind: What you sow is what you reap.

B. Law of Same Measure: Sow more, reap more; sow little, reap little.

II. The Law of Harvest

- **The first law of harvest — the Law of Same Kind:**

What you sow is what you reap; the nature of the harvest always matches the nature of the seed.

- **This is a simple, obvious, and unbreakable truth:**

If you sow melons, you reap melons.

If you sow beans, you reap beans.

One who sows melons will not reap beans; one who sows beans will not reap melons.

The harvest always matches the seed.

Those who sow to the flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, and those who sow to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit .

The flesh cannot reap eternal life; the Spirit cannot reap corruption.

- **Isn't it foolish?**

If someone plants beans but expects melons, that person is a fool.

If someone sows to the flesh but expects an abundant life, that person is also a fool.

What you reap can never be of a different nature from what you sow.

II. The Law of Harvest

• **The second law of harvest — the Law of Same Measure:**

Sow much, reap much; sow little, reap little. The quantity of the harvest is always proportional to the quantity of the seed. If you plant one acre, you reap one acre; if you plant a hundred acres, you reap a hundred. Life works the same way.

Everyone has two choices: generosity or stinginess. The generous give much, and those who give much will receive much. The stingy give little, and those who give little will receive little.

• **Generosity is a choice:**

It is far more related to the heart than to wealth. A rich person is not necessarily generous, and a poor person is not necessarily stingy. A wealthy man may cling tightly to his possessions, while a widow may give her last two small coins.

• **Generosity is multidimensional:**

Generosity is not limited to money. Some people are generous in criticism but stingy in praise. Some are generous in attacking others but stingy in offering encouragement. Others are the opposite—they generously give praise, encouragement, kindness, and material help. Those who give much also receive much; their lives become rich and joyful.

II. The Law of Harvest

- We thank God, for He grants His children abundant grace and wonderful opportunities. Each person sows in the field of his own life, and each one reaps accordingly.
 - **Constants and variables:** At times, variables arise—one may sow many good seeds yet encounter a year of famine and fail to receive the expected harvest. But looking at the constant principle, life unfailingly follows the law of reaping: whatever you sow, that you will also reap; those who sow sparingly reap sparingly, and those who sow generously reap generously.
-

Four Laws of Spiritual Economics

III. Law of Sharing

3. Law of Sharing (Law of Equality):

“Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality, as it is written: ‘The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little.’” (2 Corinthians 8:13–15)

III. Law of Sharing

- The Basic Concept of the Law of Sharing : God’s provision is abundant—more than enough for all His children. If lack occurs, the problem is not with supply but with distribution. God’s children are channels of grace; those who have more should share with those who have less.
 - In modern society, this issue is mainly addressed by the government. Through taxation, the government uses national resources to help the poor, which aligns with the biblical principle of “the surplus supplying the lack.”
 - In ancient society, governments did not handle such matters, so the church took responsibility for caring for the poor among them. According to the book of Acts, many believers sold their land and houses and used the proceeds to help those in need.
 - Paul’s collection of offerings in Corinth to support the believers in Judea followed the same principle: your abundance now can supply their lack; their abundance in the future may supply your lack.
-

III. Law of Sharing

- The principle of equality is not limited to material possessions. There are many things you can share—encouragement, praise, warmth, God’s love, the gospel, and more.
 - Many people in this world are deeply lacking in encouragement and warmth. If you have an abundance of these, you can share them with others so that God’s grace may be distributed more equally.
-

Four Laws of Spiritual Economics

IV. Law of Generosity

4. Law of Generosity :

“God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work...Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” (2 Corinthians 9:8, 10–11)

IV. Law of Generosity

- When we share what we possess with others, we may sometimes worry: If I give to others, will I have enough for myself? There is no need to worry. God is generous. The more you give to others, the more He gives to you. God is generous toward the generous—toward those who freely share with others.
- What we share with others is what God has given us and what others lack. Beyond material possessions, this includes love, kindness, warmth, encouragement, comfort, exhortation, and support.
- In the United States—a society marked by intense competition and abundant material wealth—what many people lack is not money, but encouragement and warmth. The more you give to others, the more God gives to you.

IV. Law of Generosity

- Using farming as a metaphor: When God gives you more, it is not for you to store up grain, but to increase the seed you can sow, to multiply the fruit of righteousness, and to enable you to do more good works.
 - The Law of Generosity is built on faith in God: It is founded on the belief that everything we have is given by God. The more you share with others, the more God will give to you.
 - The core belief of the Law of Generosity is “grace that never runs out.” Its concept is abundance, not scarcity; its practice is generosity, not stinginess. Everything is grace—grace is meant to be shared, and grace can never be exhausted.
-

Two Principles for Handling Finances

1. **The Principle of Light :**

“We are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man.” (2 Corinthians 8:21)

2. **The Principle of Thanksgiving :**

“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15)

Principle of Light

- In all matters involving finances, everything must be handled with transparency. No single person should manage money alone, in order to avoid suspicion.
- In addition to sending Titus to handle the offering, Paul also sent two other brothers with him: *As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for the other brothers, they are representatives of the churches and an honor to Christ. (2 Corinthians 8:23)*

Principle of Light

- A church's finances must be handled by at least two people, with weekly reports made public and with oversight from the board and the congregation.
 - Pastors should not handle financial matters. They should devote themselves to "prayer and the ministry of the Word," and should not inquire about who gives more or who gives less, nor should they touch the money.
 - Some churches ignore the principle of transparency and handle finances secretly, leading people into temptation. Some pastors involve themselves in financial matters, cannot withstand the temptation, and end up in disgrace.
 - If the principle of transparency is strictly followed from the very beginning, giving the devil no foothold, many opportunities for sin can be avoided.
-

Principle of Thanksgiving

- *“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15)*
 - Christians should have a grateful heart, continually giving thanks for God’s blessings.
 - Ultimately, everything is God’s grace; gratitude is our duty, and we ought to give thanks.
 - Gratitude brings joy. A thankful person not only glorifies God but also experiences joy personally. And by sharing God’s grace with others, that joy increases, and gratitude increases all the more.
-

A Shift in Tone at the End of the Letter: The Severe Chapters (10–13)

- Beginning in chapter 10 and continuing to the end of the letter, Paul suddenly changes his tone. His words now point directly at those in the church who were disobedient, and his tone becomes extremely severe. Some readers feel a sense of contrast—earlier Paul spoke with encouragement and gratitude, so why does the latter part contain sharp rebukes, even sounding harsh or biting?
- Indeed, chapters 10–13 of 2 Corinthians are among the sternest passages in all of Paul’s letters. This severity was necessary. The Corinthian church had many problems—divisions, moral corruption, lawsuits among believers, even drunkenness during the Lord’s Supper—but these were not the main issue. The real problem was that they had listened to false apostles, drifted away from the gospel of Jesus Christ, and deviated from foundational truths. Paul says:
 - *If someone comes and preaches another Jesus than the one we preached, or if you receive a different spirit than the one you received, or a different gospel than the one you accepted... such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve. (2 Corinthians 11:4, 13–15)*

A Shift in Tone at the End of the Letter: The Severe Chapters (10–13)

- Paul says that his feelings were like those of a man who had betrothed his daughter to Christ, only to find that she could not resist temptation, abandoned her husband, and ran off with someone else.
 - *“I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. But I am afraid that just as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 11:2–3)*
 - Here we see the character and resolve of a true servant of God. For the sake of Christ, he can feel indignation, sorrow, and the need to rebuke. He is not a people-pleaser who avoids offending others by speaking only pleasant words. His goal is clear: to lead people to obey Christ—not only to profess faith with their mouths, but to submit to the Lord and remain loyal to Him. When disobedience arises in the church, and people drift from Christ and refuse correction, Paul exercises his apostolic authority and administers severe discipline.
-

The Unimpressive Preacher

- Modern people value outward appearance. When they encounter a preacher with good looks, they like him even before he speaks. If he preaches with power, fluency, and pleasing content, he will surely be popular. Whether his teaching is sound, or whether prolonged listening might lead people away from Christ—these concerns often receive far less attention.
- It was the same in Paul’s time. Greek and Roman rhetoric and oratory were at their peak, and public speakers were highly admired. Even without microphones, those “golden voices” could captivate crowds. With a few religious terms, some biblical knowledge, and a tone of piety, such speakers could easily win over a church like Corinth. These are the people Paul referred to as *“false teachers”* and *“super-apostles.”*
- In contrast, Paul admitted that he was *“unimpressive in appearance and his speaking amounts to nothing” (2 Corinthians 10:10)*. Standing there, he already appeared inferior. Once he opened his mouth, others spoke eloquently and beautifully, while he stammered and spoke plainly—there was simply no comparison. Faced with such an “unimpressive” preacher, what should a church do?

The Unimpressive Preacher

- If this were “the Corinthian church” , the situation would be very difficult. Their spiritual maturity was low, and modern preachers do not possess apostolic authority like Paul did. Even if they rebuke the congregation, the people would not listen. As a result, the church frequently changes pastors—one comes, another leaves. Over time, pastors become discouraged, and the church gradually withers.
 - But if it were a church like Antioch, Berea, or Philippi, where the foundation of truth is solid and believers are humble and eager to learn, false teachers can hardly infiltrate. A true servant of God, even if “unimpressive,” would still be loved by the congregation. The church would be nurtured and built up, believers would grow spiritually, the gospel would spread, and vibrant spiritual life would flourish.
 - The final chapters of 2 Corinthians serve as a highly practical guide for church life. With apostolic authority, passionate emotion, severe words, and even sharp sarcasm, Paul exposes the shortcomings of the Corinthian church. There is no sugar-coating—only blunt honesty: You have strayed from Christ, and you still expect pleasant words from me? Absolutely not!
 - The scalpel has already cut in, and the tumor has been exposed. What remains is to remove it, stitch the wound, and allow healing to begin.
-

The Authority of God's Servants

• *“The Lord gave us authority for building you up, not for tearing you down. Even if I boast somewhat about this authority, I will not be ashamed.” (2 Corinthians 10:8)*

- Do God's servants have authority? Yes. This authority comes from the Lord and is given for the building up of the church.
- The Lord has authority; the servant does not. The Lord's words carry authority; the servant's words do not.
- When a servant obeys the Lord and walks in His will, he has authority. When a servant proclaims the Lord's words—rather than his own words or the world's words—he has authority.
- The authority of a servant is not for self-glorification but for building up the church and fulfilling God's purpose within it.

The Authority of God's Servants

- What exactly is this authority? Can God's servant punish people? Can he imprison anyone? No. Those belong to Caesar's authority—the authority of the government. God's servant does not possess that kind of power.
- The authority of God's servant is this: to teach in the name of the Lord, to rebuke in the name of the Lord, to bless in the name of the Lord, and—when necessary—to hand someone over to Satan (that is, to remove them from the fellowship of the church).
- *“When you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan...” (1 Corinthians 5:4–5)*

The Authority of God's Servants

- Some churches think the church is the employer and the pastor is the hired worker—if he doesn't perform well, they “fire” him and replace him with someone else.
 - Some pastors also think the church is the employer and they are the employees—they work, and the church pays them.
 - With this kind of mindset, churches frequently change pastors, and pastors frequently change churches. The result is loss for the church and loss for the pastor.
-

The Godly Jealousy of God's Servant

• *“I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him. But I am afraid that just as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 11:2–3)*

• There are two kinds of “good jealousy”, both sharing the same holy nature:

1. **God's jealousy:** The Lord is a jealous God.

2. **The servant's jealousy:** That the church belongs to the Lord alone.

The Boasting of God's Servant

1. *“As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, nobody in the regions of Achaia will stop this **boasting** of mine.” (2 Corinthians 11:10)*
2. *“Since many are **boasting** according to the flesh, I too will **boast**.” (2 Corinthians 11:18)*
3. *“If I must **boast**, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.” (2 Corinthians 11:30)*
4. *“**Boasting** is not profitable, but I am compelled. I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 12:1)*

The Boasting of God's Servant

- Shouldn't God's servant be humble? Why, then, does Paul boast? Isn't boasting unspiritual?
- There are two reasons a servant of God may boast:
 1. To glorify the Lord
 - Paul boasts about his weaknesses in order to reveal the Lord's grace; through the parts of himself that are not honorable, he displays the Lord's glory.
 2. To build up the church.
 - Paul boasts about his background, experiences, and accomplishments in the Lord so that he may gain the trust of the immature Corinthians and build them up, because these are the things they pay attention to. In other words, self-boasting is the means, and edification is the goal.
- **A warning**: Boasting is a dangerous act. Every measure of self-praise diminishes oneself by the same measure. Only those whose spiritual life is humble to the point of having "no self" can emerge unscathed from boasting. Those lacking spiritual maturity should be cautious.

Satan's (and His Servants') Art of Disguise

- *“Such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.” (2 Corinthians 11:13–15)*

- Two kinds of disguises:

1. Satan masquerades as an angel of light
2. Satan's servants masquerade as servants of righteousness